



## **MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION**

**Held Wednesday, June 28, 2000**

**For the purpose of meeting with the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee**

The meeting began at 8:13 p.m. It was held in the Senior Classroom of the Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Council members Rodney M. Roberts, Edward V.J. Putens, Alan Turnbull and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk; Karen Haseley, Therapeutic Supervisor, Recreation Dept. and Staff Liaison to the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Gerry Madison, Etta Fitzgerald, Pearl Siegel, Betty Timer, and Leah Warner of the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee; and Amy Boyes, the Gazette.

Mayor Davis began with introductions. She then identified the items on the Annual Forum Report that either had been responded to previously (#s 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12) or could not be resolved at this meeting (#13, regarding bus service on Sunday). She asked if anyone wished to make any corrections on her classifications.

Mr. Madison asked to clarify #1 on the report (a complaint about loud music on the lake trail), saying that the problem had not really been the noise itself as much as the hostile attitude of the individual playing the music. It was suggested that the park ranger occasionally make rounds earlier than the scheduled starting hour, just to establish a less predictable presence. Mr. McLaughlin said he would talk with the Recreation Dept. about doing this.

Several items were grouped as relating to Roosevelt Center. Mayor Davis asked for clarification on #3, regarding signage, and Ms. Haseley said the problem with bikes, etc., was not so much inside the mall but along the walkways leading into the Center. Since there are many points of entry to the Center, there is no easy way to post rules. There was no clear solution to this problem, but a number of ideas were discussed, including: making the signs more visible; researching different types of signs that might be available; putting signs in merchants' windows; expanding education efforts to those causing the problems. Mr. Roberts questioned whether the problem was one of signs or one of enforcement. It was also suggested that rather than saying "No bikes," any future signs should specify that it is the riding of bikes, etc., that is forbidden. Ms. Timer asked if there might be some way to reward virtue rather than just stating negatives. The Mayor and Mr. Turnbull both cited instances where police were armed, for example, with coupons from local merchants to use in reinforcing good behavior, and this sounded like an idea worth pursuing.

Regarding #7, discussion of the adequacy of handicapped-parking spaces kept returning to the need for a survey of the usage of existing spaces. The Mayor emphasized the need to do this in the evening and on weekends, as well as weekdays. She also asked that a map showing existing designated spaces be provided to Council. Also discussed was the location of the space near the ramp at the Coop. It has been thought to be unsafe because the ramp is used by skateboarders; "corrugating" the ramp has been discussed as a solution to that problem. Regardless of that issue, however, the space is very hard to navigate, even for small cars, let alone vans that would accommodate wheelchairs. Mr. Madison suggested putting it at the other end of the row of parking. Mr. McLaughlin said its current location was better suited to the merchants at the dry cleaner/theater end of the Center. Mr. Madison countered by saying it was easier to park in front of the Center for those stores than to use the space near the Coop.

#2. It was agreed that licensing bicycles would not really be useful and that increased efforts should continue to teach bicycle etiquette regarding pedestrians. Mr. Turnbull noted that state law requires bikes to have bells and that this can often be used by the police for enforcement of other offenses. He noted that many aspects of this behavior are in fact convention rather than law and that trails are not subject to Maryland road laws.

The Mayor asked if there were issues other than those on the SCAC Annual Forum report. Mr. Madison said the committee was not happy with Ms. Haseley's having been appointed to prepare the staff response to the Forum Report this year. They thought this was adding too much to her workload, as well as changing the method of follow-up to the forum. Mr. McLaughlin responded that he found this process to be considerably more efficient than having the response come from his office, since Ms. Haseley already has the information and context that require considerable gearing-up by another staff member. He also said he would provide any type of support that she needs to ensure that action items in response to the SCAC report are handled. The Mayor said she thought the issues had all been aired. She emphasized that Mr. McLaughlin is in charge of staff and that he and Ms. Haseley could discuss the matter further if need be. Ms. Fitzgerald asked that it be noted that it was the committee that raised the concerns and that Ms. Haseley had not complained.

The Mayor announced that an ad would appear in the News Review this week for a volunteer to serve as a pedestrian advocate on the Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

The meeting ended at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Gallagher

City Clerk